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ABSTRACT

Designed to teach twelfth grade English honors students in Kentucky to think critically, to write creatively, to develop a better self-concept, and to stimulate appreciation and pride for Appalachian literature and culture, this 9-week resource unit features mini-units on (1) Man and His Values; (2) Death; (3) Prejudice; (4) Strip Mining; and (5) Student Teaching. The unit begins with a statement of general course objectives. Each of the five mini-units includes specific objectives, estimated teaching time, presentation of materials and resources in the order they are to be used, teaching procedures, and a lesson plan for the course content. The units correlate music and art wherever possible as a means to accomplish course objectives. Emphasis is placed on the clarification of values. The last mini-unit is designed to provide the student with an opportunity to teach an Appalachian literary selection of poetry or prose to classmates. (CM)

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VIEWS OF APPALACHIA

Resource Unit

by

Shirley R. Chafin

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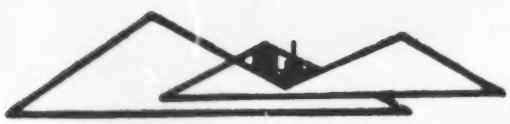

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VIEWS OF APPALACHIA

Resource Unit

By

SHIRLEY R. CHAFIN

EDUCATION 661

EDUCATION 665

UNIVERSITY OF KENTUCKY

July 19, 1976

3/4

Views of Appalachia

Introduction

In the fall of 1976 I shall be teaching an Honors English class, grade 12 at Johnson Central High School in Paintsville, Kentucky. The class will be comprised of 15 honors students who last spring elected to take the experimental class as a substitute for the "traditional" English IV requirement. The majority of these students come from the advanced junior English class which I taught last year. With an emphasis on literature and oral and written composition, the students throughout the year will choose most of the units they will study. The majority plan to attend college; thus, they have been made aware of the possible conflict between this particular less structured high school classroom situ tion where creativity and freedom of expression are encouraged along with development of thinking processes as opposed oftentimes to the more st uctured college classroom with less discussion and fewer choices in writing material and style. The highly structured college classroom has been the finding of most of our students who report back; however, there have been exceptions. At any rate, to enable the student to adapt more easily to either situation, I attempt to expose him to a taste of both worlds with an emphasis on the former.

These primary objectives of the course are to teach the student to analyze and think critically by exposing him to a wide range of world literature and philosophies, to aid the student to develop a self awareness by examining his ideas, attitudes, and values, and to encourage creativity, thus creating greater insight into self on the premise that if he can

understand and relate to himself that he can understand and relate to others more effectively.

The foregoing objectives enable me to propose to this class a nine weeks series of mini-units on Appalachian literature, correlating music and art wherever possible, as a means to accomplishing these goals. Whether the class chooses the unit depends upon my salesmanship. However, I have confidence that I can generate sufficient enthusiasm to "sell" the unit to them. In addition to teaching the student to think, write creatively, and to develop a better self concept, I would add a fourth objective for the Appalachian unit—to stimulate an appreciation and pride for Appalachian literature and culture, especially the strengths of the culture.

The entire series will be called Views of Appalachia with mini-units on (1) Man and His Values, (2) Death, (3) Prejudice, (4) Strip Mining, and (5) Student Teaching.

The time spent on each mini-unit should be flexible and adjustable in length to the needs and interests of the students.

Also the length and detail of the units are such here that they will facilitate the teaching of the course with a minimum of further preparation on my part this fall.

The success of this nine weeks unit will determine in part whether an Appalachian literature course will be offered for a semester to other grades and all academic levels in the school year of 1977-78.

Views of Appalachia

General Objectives:

1. To examine the relevance of values and philosophies of the students today to the values and philosophies of the literary characters
2. To guide the students to awareness so as to enable them to understand and tolerate the views of others who may differ but make no attempt to impose values or ideas.
3. To stimulate independent thought and research.
4. To encourage honest discussion
5. To develop an interest in creative writing as a possible vehicle for examining one's values and a means of self expression.
6. To demonstrate a recognition of the worth of some Appalachian literature by examining character, theme, and style of various authors and types of literature
7. To create an appreciation for the Appalachian culture

Man and his Values

Specific Objectives:

1. To understand the concept of values and their relation to behavior
2. To establish rapport and trust among the group
3. To create an atmosphere of open discussion
4. To share ideas and respect the views of others
5. To begin to probe into self and become aware of values

Estimated Time:

Two weeks

Materials and Resources:

(In order to be used)

Howe, Leland W., Kirschenbaum, Howard, and Simon, Sidney B. Values Clarification. New York: Hart Publishing Co., Inc. 1972.

Jones, Loyal. "Appalachian Values," Voices from the Hills. ed. Robert J. Higgs and Ambrose Manning. New York: Frederick Ungar Pub. Co. 1975.

Harmin, Merrill, Raths, Louis E., and Simon, Sidney. Values and Teaching. Columbus, Ohio: Charles E. Merrill Publishing Co., 1966.

Chaffin, Lillie D. "Appalachian Child" and "Discipline." 8th Day 13th Moon. Pikeville, Ky., Pikeville College Press, 1974.

Chafin, Shirley. "Man is the color of seasons," "Man's Fate," and "What Is Man?" Unpublished.

Record - "Appalachian Spring"

Resource person, artist, Betty Spradlin

Wolfe, Thomas. "This Is Man" and "Eugene," A Stone, a Leaf, a Door. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1935.

Procedure:

1. Lecture
2. Small and larger group discussion
3. Writing
4. Resource person shows and tells about "arts" and crafts.

Course Content:

I. Explanation of values clarification
   A. Awareness of self created by looking for explanations and patterns of choosing, prizing, and acting, and thereby achieve more direction and control over one's life instead of being manipulated by "external pressures and inner compulsions."
   B. Examination of "(1) how we choose, (2) what we choose, (3) how we feel about our choice, (4) how we act upon our choices."

II. Values exercise number 1 "Twenty Things You Love to Do" (p. 30-34 in Values Clarification)
   A. Students and teacher list 20 things in life you love to do. (mutual sharing of teacher with students)
   B. Code items with no more than 5 codings. For example place $ beside any item costing more than $3.00 each time it is done etc.
   C. Choose a partner and one item from the list to discuss 5 advantages or pleasures from that activity. Change partners a couple of times.
   D. Help students focus on personal learnings. Write "I learned that I..." statements.

III. Values exercise number 2 "Personal Coat of Arms"(p. 278 Values Clarification)
   A. Draw a picture, a symbol to answer first 5 questions. Answer number 6 in words.
   B. Students share, if they wish, in small groups.

IV. Reading and discussion of Loyal Jones's article "Appalachian Values"
   A. Religious values and their impact on social progress

B. Individualism, independence, pride
C. Hospitality
D. Role of family "reference group"?
E. Personalism—Appalachians' view of outsiders
F. Love of place
G. Modesty
H. Sense of beauty
I. Sense of humor
J. Patriotism
K. Views on tradition and change

V. Values exercise number 3 "Who Are You?"(p. 306 Values Clarification) If you had only 10 words to convey who you are as a person, write the ones you would choose. Discuss the criteria each has used to judge himself. Do we define ourselves by the roles we have been assigned?

VI. Reading and discussion of Thomas Wolfe's poems "This Is Man" and "Eugene"
A. Background on Wolfe given by student volunteer
B. Wolfe's concept of man as revealed through the poems-characterization
C. Is Wolfe realistic, complimentary, optimistic?
D. Wolfe's concept of immortality
E. Distinction of negative and positive traits
F. The stranger in man
G. Class's agreement or disagreement with supporting evidence
H. Type of verse - free verse

VII. Reading and discussion of Lillie D. Chaffin's poems "Appalachian Child" and "Discipline"
A. Symbolism in "Appalachian Child"
B. Mainstream American judgements
C. Emphasis on self reliance in "Discipline"
D. How does one become self reliant?
E. Style of verse

VIII. Reading and discussion of 3 short poems by Shirley Chafin "Man is the color of seasons," "Man's Fate," and "What Is Man"

A. Discuss philosophy of free will versus predestination.

B. Man's purpose?

IX. Creative writing assignment in class—poetry or prose, any subject. Play "Appalachian Spring" as stimulation for creative ideas.

X. Have resource person Betty Spradlin from rural community to come and bring some of her paintings and ceramic pieces, and crafts to show and talk about.

A. Definition and characteristics of art

B. Definition and characteristics of crafts

C. Concept of beauty

D. Relationship of beauty to arts and crafts?

XI. Read and discuss creative writing works done previously.

Death

Specific Objectives:

1. To discover how death affects the Appalachian family through some music, literature, and personal experiences
2. To analyze ballad structure
3. To understand how death is coped with in Appalachian culture
4. To examine the relationship of views of death to different religions
5. To discover the strengths that can result from death
6. To gain a more realistic attitude toward death and realize it is a natural part of man's "cycle" to be coped with
7. To examine the Appalachian family structure

Estimated Time:

Three Weeks

Materials and Resources:

Record-"The Wife of Usher's Well" sung by Jean Ritchie
Record-"Fair Margaret and Sweet William" sung by Jean Ritchie
Miller, Jim W. "Listening," "Vine," "Aunt Gladys' Home Movie #31 (Albert's Funeral)," "My Uncle's Death Alters the Course of History." Dialogue with a Dead Man. Athens, Ga., U. of Ga. Press, 1974.
Wolfe, Thomas, "Death, Loneliness, and Sleep"
Resource person-doctor from community
Resource peerons-Catholic and Protestant ministers from community
Agee, James. A Death in the Family. New York: Bantam Books, 1938.
Schrank, Jeffrey. "Learning about Death," Teaching Human Beings: 101 Subversive Activities for the Classroom. Boston: Beacon Press, 1972.

Procedure:

1. Lecture
2. Discussion
3. Writing
4. Resource persons
5. Pre-test over novel
6. Major test over novel

Course Content:

I. Personal feelings and experiences shared
   Possible questions:
   A. How do you feel about death? Afterlife?
   B. How does your attitude affect your daily life?
   C. When do you think about death?
   D. If you were dying of a fatal disease, would you want to be told? Why or why not?
   E. How can society more effectively prepare its members for death?
   F. What effect does the traditional Appalachian funeral held in various churches have upon the family of the deceased?
   G. How would you have your own funeral conducted if you had a choice?
   H. Discuss the meaning of ritual in a funeral.
   I. Discuss different concepts of the soul.
   J. Observation: "One's death is a reminder to the living that they too are going to die."

II. Miller's poetry
   A. "Listening" and "Vine"
      1. Grief-stricken person withdraws from a portion of reality, lives in past.
      2. Anger and bitterness expressed by one of the living who emphasizes present

3. Lonely feeling of the living being left out
4. Imagery
5. Metaphor

B. "Aunt Gladys's Home Movie #31 (Albert's Funeral)"
1. A compulsion to preserve the death scene in film, the final appearance of the dead to be retrieved at will
2. Nostalgia in remembering the patterns of the dead one
3. Ironic ending
4. Symbolism of flowers

C. "My Uncle's Death Alters the Course of History"
1. Traditional role of the woman in Appalachian society, dependent on husband for all decisions except domestic ones—Is this a realistic, typical view of the Appalachian woman? What is the woman's role today?
2. Escape from reality, still more dependent
3. Realism

VI. Wolfe's poem "Death, Loneliness, and Sleep"
A. Ironic, sarcastic tone
B. Personification
C. Companions of death

VII. Have a community doctor come and talk to class of his manner of treating a person who is terminally ill.

VIII. Have the Catholic priest and a Protestant minister spend an hour together explaining the differences in their concepts of death and the hereafter.

IX. Pre-test on Agee's A Death in the Family

X. Analysis of A Death in the Family following background on Agee
A. Why do we fear death?
B. Is it beneficial for us to fear death?
C. To what extent do our thoughts control our feelings or attitudes? If we change our negative thoughts to more positive ones via. reason, can this change our attitudes?

D. Stages in accepting a death
   1. Disbelief or rejection of idea
   2. Sadness or grief
   3. Anger
   4. Acceptance

E. Examine character of Jay, Mary, and Rufus.

F. Role of family tradition: When Grandfather Follet is ill and may be dying, it is the <u>duty</u> of children to be there for moral support. Mary's secret wish for Grandfather's death because it would bring "relief and release. And it occurred to her, he'll no longer stand between Jay and me." p. 56 "Oh, Lord, she prayed; forgive me my unspeakable sinful thought...." Penitent. (momentary rejection of self) Ralph's insinuation that it would be "mighty strange" if his oldest boy, the one he always thought the most of did not come when the father was dying. <u>Duty</u> to father ironically brings about Jay's own death. Emphasis on <u>duty to others before self</u>.

G. Trace the steps Agee has used to show the family's acceptance of the loss of the head of the household.
   1. Foreshadowing of Jay's death—Mary's explanation to Rufus about Grandfather's illness and what happens to one when he is sick and dies— tendency to hide reality when harsh— <u>Escape</u> in language p. 59 "God lets you go to sleep and you can't see people anymore...You wake up right away in heaven, but people on earth can't see you anymore, and you can't see them." Rufus asks if Oliver, their cat, went to heaven too. Still more illusion: "Part of heaven is especially for cats." Inability to understand why God lets things happen—a part of his plan— Emphasis on <u>faith</u>.

2. Phone call to Mary from man who found Jay's body—man does not tell Mary Jay is dead. Thinks it should be done by family member—Consideration—
3. Before confirmation of Jay's death, Mary grapples with the possibility that Jay is dead, but does not face it.
4. Length of time in Andrew's return convinces herself he is most likely dead. When Andrew returns, Mary senses the worst.

H. The adult's coping with death—Mary

1. Sleeplessness
2. Deep desire to have all the details of Jay's death recreated verbally in order to understand how it occurred.
3. Mary's regret at Jay's not knowing he had a moment to know his life was ending.
4. Andrew takes pains to convince her Jay did not suffer—died of a brain concussion.
5. Mary does not wake children but waits till morning to explain to them what has happened. Is this typical?
6. Mary's insistance on A Catholic funeral even though Jay was not Catholic. A feeling that her religion was superior. Difficulty in accepting Jay's not being"saved."
7. Rejection—Mary's escape in believing Jay's spirit has returned.
8. Anger toward God at the injustice
9. Sadness
10. Night of Jay's death Mary's mother and father and Aunt Hannah come to comfort her. Everyone but Aunt Hannah goes home to try to sleep—a dignity in coping with death
11. Mary's father beforehand explains how it will be hardest later. Impact to come will be worse—tells her to brace herself and hold herself together. Emphasis on going through it <u>alone</u>. Stresses reason.

12. Mary has <u>good self image</u> - stems from relationship with her father. Closeness of the two gives confidence. She has achieved a sense of worth, believes in herself and is able to conquer or control her emotions. She realizes her own choice of living or dying. Her father warns her not to hide in her religion. He is not religious.
13. Mary realizes her own strength. Finds solace in God. "Endurance is what life is all about." Death gave her insight into herself—knowledge of her capacity to endure—and then she understood what others had to experience.
14.. Is mary's somewhat calm behavior typical of how families you know accept death? Explain.

I. The child's coping with death—Rufus
1. Rufus' closeness to his father told in a series of flashbacks interspersed throughout the novel.
2. Mary explains Jay's death to Rufus and his three year old sister, Catherine, by saying, "He's gone away to heaven and he isn't ever coming home again." Rufus startles Mary when he asks "Is Daddy <u>dead</u>?"
3. Custom for children to stay home from school for a death even though nothing could be done.
4. Rufus helps his sister dress. Senses something is changed regarding his father but has not fully realized the impact the death will have on him. Does not quite believe it.
5. Both children are puzzled.
6. Rufus shows affection and understanding toward his mother periodically.
7. On the day Rufus stays home from school, he sneaks off to meet the other boys who have not accepted him before, due to his contrasting middle class <u>different</u> standards and his non-violence; he expects sympathy but instead receives cruelty

when one of the boys says his father bet Jay was drunk.

8. Rufus believes his father's soul may be around, watching over them and it would understand Rufus didn't mean to "do bad" in his "showing off" because he was dead.
9. Rufus' fear of being "orphaned"
10. Mary has explained to the children the idea about the soul always thinking about them.
11. Rufus is also made to feel an outsider with the priest. Bitterness and hostility expressed toward priest. A resentment toward his conversations with Mary. Feeling of isolation and loneliness.
12. In end Rufus transfers a part of his admiration of his father to his uncle Andrew and goes on. Things are not the same. They never will be, but life will go on. Exemplifies the ability of the young to adapt so readily to new situations, to accept more readily than the adult things that cannot be changed.

J. In the end Andrew's questioning the validity of religion is posed. He ridicules Father Jackson, who represents the middle class social standards of religion, because he could not read the complete burial service over Jay since he had not been baptized. Father Jackson judged. Ironically Andrew too judged and rejected.

K. Style of novel
   1. Local color-customs, place
   2. Figurative language and imagery
   3. Flashbacks
   4. Shifts from past to present tense for effect
   5. Empathy

L. Agee's philosophies on death, change, tradition, role of religion in one's life, family

M. Students' philosophies discussed

N. Assign an exposition with outline of topic to be handed in within one week
Possible topics if student does not have one in mind concerning Agee's novel:
1. Compare and contrast how the adult and child deal with death.
2. Discuss the role of family in the novel.
3. The Appalachian value of duty to others before self.
4. Ideas on how to view death more realistically.
5. Contrast of the aged person's view of life with the young person's.
6. The role of religion in regard to death.

O.. Major test over novel.

XI...Ballads

A. Characteristics of ballads

B. "The Wife of Usher's Well" sung by Jean Ritchie
1. Element of supernatural
2. Feeling of grief, sadness
3. Theory of insanity as an escape from death in the ballad

C. "Fair Margaret and Sweet William" sung by Jean Ritchie
1. Feeling of sorrow
2. Death sometimes causes others to escape from the pain and anguish through suicide.

Prejudice

Specific Objectives:

1. To again examine role of family in regard to tradition, funerals and duty
2. To view the effect of death on individuals.
3. To analyze views of prejudice, not only racial but ideological prejudices
4. To examine the concept of justice

Estimated Time:

Four days

Materials:

Values Clarification

Haun, Mildred, "Melungeon-Colored," Voices from the Hills. ed. Robert J. Higgs and Ambrose N. Manning. New York: Frederick Ungar Publishing Co., 1975.

Procedure:

1. Lecture
2. Small and larger group discussion

Course Content:

I. Values exercise number 4 "Spread of Opinion" p. 127
Values Clarification
Break into small groups of 3. 3 groups will discuss prejudice , 2 will discuss justice. Definitions must be clarified. Identify conservative, moderate, and liberal stands and argue in groups on that position. Convene later in large group to explain ideas brought out.

II. Read and discuss "Melungeon-Colored"
A. Background on Mildred Haun
B. Discuss character of the grandmother, the notion of duty to her deceased daughter to protect Cordia from her heritage. Her loyalty is carried to extremes, to the point of the grandmother's wishing Cordia and herself dead, if necessary, to avoid scandal.
Allows Cordia's and baby's murders to occur with only mild protest—subconsciously wished for Cordia's death and the baby's

Grandmother takes solace from the earth in the end—picks poke sallet for supper—vivid imagery—"cool air," "sunset," "honeybee," "pretty pied butterflies," "peaceful as a kitten"—no sense of guilt.

C. Emphasis on group with total disregard for individual's needs and desires.

D. Family loyalty—willing to trudge through storm to help Cordia's baby be born—disregard of self—wishes she herself would die so she would be released from the conflict and possibility of scandal.

E. Prejudice based on <u>ignorance</u>—no effort to understand.

F. Discuss Mos's and the grandmother's lack of guilt. What caused them to justify the murders? Twisted values? Mos never knew the <u>truth</u>. Truth was not a concern with either character except as related to a sort of false individual truth. Their preoccupation with society caused them to lead what Ibaen called the "Life's lie."

G. Discuss the concept of justice.

H. Discuss the relationship of race prejudice to the mountaineer's rejection of new ideas without listening. Idea of skepticism stems from exploitation by the outsider? Examine value of skepticism. One can be skeptical, yet listen and make an attempt to <u>understand</u>. Differentiate between <u>understanding</u> and agreement. <u>One can neither accept or reject intelligently without first understanding</u>.

I. Where does prejudice originate?

J. What are the social consequences of prejudice?

K. What are the individual consequences of the person who is victimized and the one who demonstrates the prejudiced attitudes and/or actions?

L. What is the solution to prejudice?

M. Analyze style of the story.

Strip Mining

Specific Objectives:

1. To encourage appreciation of music
2. To stimulate discussion on a timely issue
3. To stimulate research and independent thought
4. To create awareness of the pros and cons of strip mining

Estimated Time:

Four days

Materials:

Record "The Coming of the Roads" sung by Billy Edd Wheeler
Record "They Can't Put It Back" sung by Billy Edd Wheeler
Research a minimum of 1 article from the library on strip Mining

Procedure:

1. Research
2. Discussion
3. Music
4. Writing

Course Content:

I. Play records "The Coming of the Roads" and "They Can't Put It Back"
II. Discussion
    A. Articles based on research
    B. Pros of Strip mining
        1. Provides jobs and money for people of the region
        2. Improvement of land appearance with proper reclamation
        3. Provides increased resources for energy supply

C. Cons of strip mining
   1. Exploitation of individuals
   2. Laws not strict enough for land reclamation
   3. Destruction of nature's beauty
   4. Decreased value of property
   5. Insufficient laws to protect property damage resulting from stripping

D. Possible questions
   1. If we do not strip mine, how do we get the energy needed now and in the near future before science has discovered and perfected other energy supplies?
   2. If you owned land and a stripper attempted to lease or buy your mineral rites, would you lease or sell them? Why or why not?
   3. To what degree should we consider our posterity?
   4. What is the general community attitude toward strippers?
   5. If land is to be stripped, what laws would you change and how would you go about changing them?
   6. In general, which is better—strip mining or deep mining? Defend.
   7. What values evidence themselves in the stripper and the land owner? Are they more negative or positive in your opinion?
   8. Why do you think the Appalachian land owner is exploited by the stripper or is he? What can be done to solve this problem if it is a problem?
   9. Define progress. Can strip mining be called progress? Why or why not?

E. Write argumentative theme on strip mining, 2 poems, or a short story.

Bonus Day

Specific Objectives:

1. To encourage appreciation for folk music, expecially Appalachian
2. To expose the students to a variety of singers of folk music, regional and otherwise
3. To acquaint the students with mountain instruments traditionally used for folk music such as the dulcimer, guitar, autoharp, and psaltery

Estimated Time:

One day

Materials and Resources:

Resource person, Nancy Spradlin, former student and Berea graduate who now teaches in Johnson County
Record by Betty Smith
Record by Billy Edd Wheeler
Record by Billy Edd Wheeler and Joan Sommer
Record by Joan Baez
Record by Joni Mitchell

Procedure:

1. Resource person, Nancy Spradlin, plays guitar and sings, also plays dulcimer and autoharp
2. Records played in remaining time

Student Teaching

Specific Objectives:

1. To provide the student with an opportunity to teach an Appalachian literary selection of poetry or prose on the premise that one learns from doing; one learns from sharing.
2. To enable the student to develop self confidence
3. To allow the student to experience responsibility for preparing and leading class discussion
4. To provide the student with choice for his teaching material
5. To expose the student to a greater variety of literature

Estimated Time:

Two weeks

Materials:

The student's imagination and/ or resources to be found in the library or community are the limit.
Possible Materials:
Any selection from Voices from the Hills
Selections from Voices from the Mountains
Selections from "Appalachian Heritage"
Selections from"Mountain Life and Work"
Selections from 'Appalachia in the Sixties
Selections from A Jesse Stuart Harvest
Selections from The Country of Marriage, poems by Wendell Berry
8th Day 13th Moon by Lillie D. Chaffin
A Stone, A Leaf, A Door, poems by Thomas Wolfe
Dialogue with a Dead Man by Jim Miller
Song of a Woods Colt by Billy Edd Wheeler
Spring of Violets for Joy by Lee Pennington
Appalachia, my Sorrow (drama) by Lee Pennington

Procedure and Evaluation:

Each student in the class of 15 will choose the literary selection he wishes to teach, make his assignment at least 3 days in advance. Each student may take minimum of a half hour or a maximum of an hour to teach. Motivational techniques, choice of material, and means of evaluation are left to the discretion of the student and his imagination. Each student will receive a teaching grade based on the research on his author, content analysis, student involvement in discussion, and general presentation. Each student will have a chance to evaluate the "teacher" on the foregoing criteria.

Evaluation:

In addition to the writing and tests already given and the oral participation, each student will do an evaluation anonymously on paper as to the value and effectiveness of the content and methods of teaching the course.